

**Release of the First U.S. National Assessment,
“Climate Change Impacts on the United States:
The Potential Consequences of Climate Variability and Change”**

I am very pleased to announce the release of the First U.S. National Assessment, “Climate Change Impacts on the United States: The Potential Consequences of Climate Variability and Change.” President Clinton announced the completion of this first comprehensive assessment of the potential impacts of climate change in an address broadcast over the Internet on Saturday, November 11, 2000.

The ongoing U.S. National Assessment process is mandated by Congress in the Global Change Research Act of 1990, and is organized by the U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP). As part of the USGCRP, EPA’s Global Change Research Program is proud to be playing a major role in the ongoing National Assessment process, and to have made significant contributions to the First U.S. National Assessment report.

The First U.S. National Assessment report is a landmark in the major ongoing effort to understand what climate change means for the U.S. Climate science is developing rapidly and scientists are increasingly able to project some changes at the regional scale, identifying regional vulnerabilities, and assessing potential regional impacts. Science increasingly indicates that the Earth’s climate has changed in the past and continues to change, and that even greater climate change is very likely in the 21st century. The report concludes that:

“Humanity’s influence on the global climate will grow in the coming century. Increasingly, there will be significant climate-related changes that will affect each one of us. We must begin now to consider our responses, as the actions taken today will affect the quality of life for us and future generations.”

This Assessment initiated a national process of research, analysis, and dialogue about the coming changes in climate, their impacts, and what Americans can do to adapt to an uncertain and continuously changing climate. This Assessment is built on a solid foundation of science conducted under the auspices of the USGCRP, involving both stakeholders and scientific experts.

The First U.S. National Assessment consists of an Overview document, a series of Regional Assessments, and five Sectoral Assessments. The Overview document, which was released by the Clinton Administration on November 11, was produced by the National Assessment Synthesis Team (NAST). The NAST is a committee of experts drawn from governments, universities, industry, and non-governmental organizations. The Regional and Sectoral reports were all sponsored by the Federal member agencies of the USGCRP, and conducted through public-private partnerships with universities and stakeholders across the country. Broad oversight

and leadership of the process was provided by the USGCRP's National Assessment Working Group (NAWG). The NAWG also helped design and implement the extensive and rigorous peer review process undergone by the First National Assessment. EPA supported this peer review process to ensure the scientific credibility and integrity of the study.

The EPA's Global Change Research Program sponsored the Health Sector Assessment and three Regional Assessments (Mid-Atlantic, Great Lakes, and Gulf Coast). EPA scientists participated in several of the Regional and Sectoral Assessments as Lead and Contributing Authors. Also, EPA is proud to have filled one of the Vice Chair positions of the NAWG.

Copies of the Overview report can be found at:

<http://www.gcric.org/nationalassessment/>

Reports from the Regional and Sectoral Assessments can be obtained through the USGCRP's official National Assessment website:

<http://www.nacc.usgcrp.gov/>

The webcast remarks by President Clinton on climate change can be found at:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/library/hot_releases/November_11_2000_001.html

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